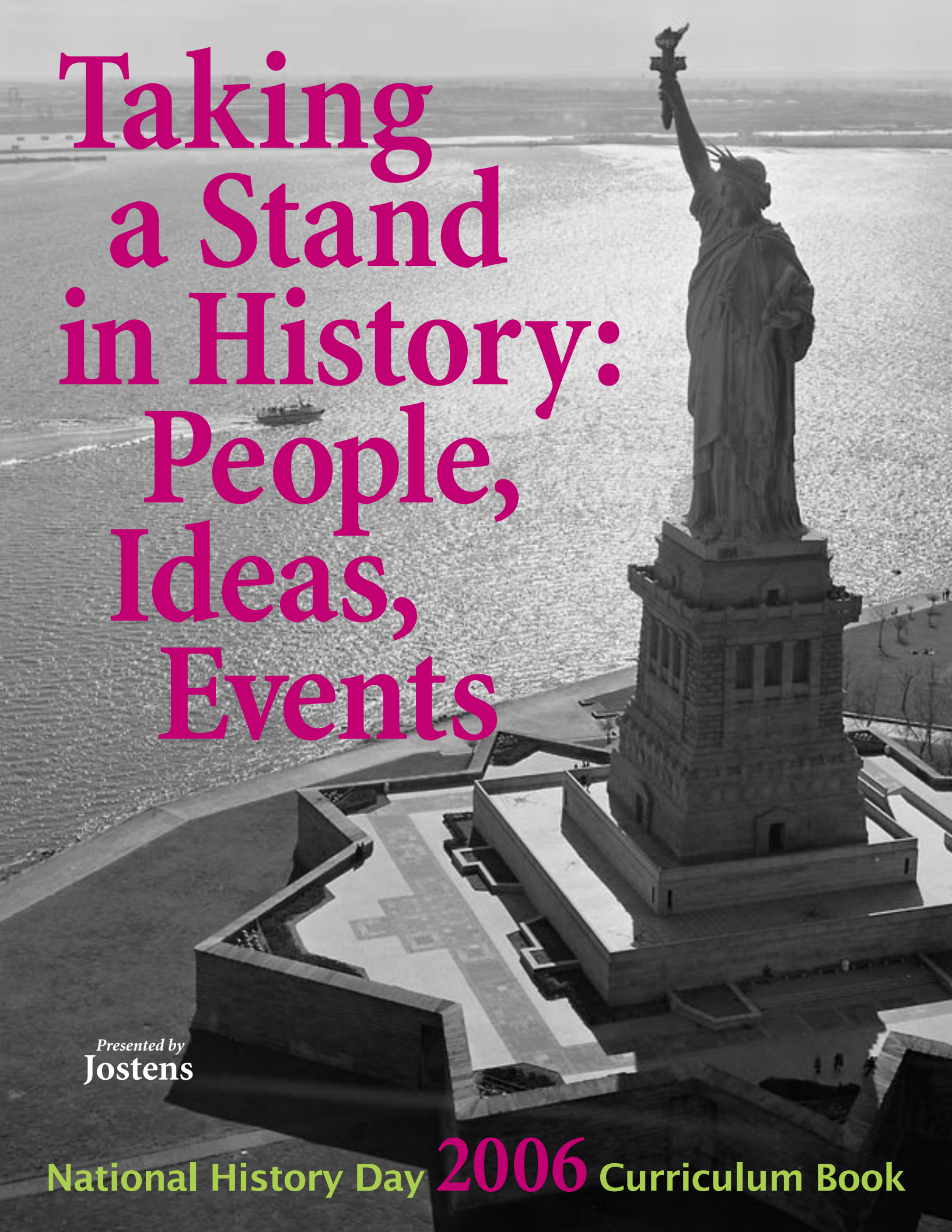
Taking a Stand in History: People, Ideas, Events



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National History Day 2006 Curriculum Book

Taking a Stand in History: People, Ideas, Events
National History Day 2006 Curriculum Book

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The American Association for State and Local History, the American Historical Association, the Federation of State Humanities Councils, the National Council for the Social Studies, and the Organization of American Historians endorse National History Day. The National Association of Secondary School Principals has placed National History Day on the NASSP National Advisory List of Contests and Activities.

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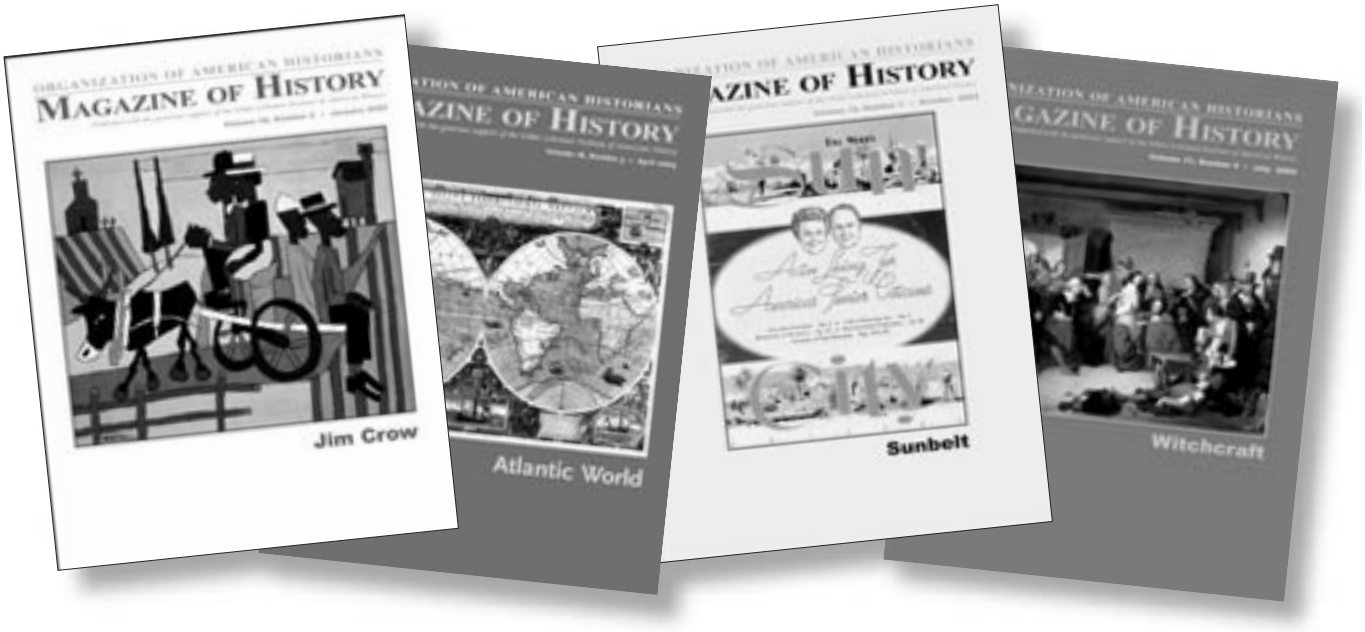

ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN HISTORIANS

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ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN HISTORIANS

Introduction

Petition Campaign, 1959. In September 1958, Daisy Bates, Ralph Bunche, Martin Luther King, Jr., A. Philip Randolph, Jackie Robinson, and Roy Wilkins launched the Youth March for Integrated Schools. Twelve thousand young people poured into Washington, D.C. on October 25 and marched down Constitution Avenue to the Lincoln Memorial where they pledged to return in 1959 bearing petitions to the President and Congress urging the speedy integration of schools. The petition call to youth asked that "wherever you may be...come to Washington on April 18, 1959, and join your presence and your voice in a mighty affirmation of equal rights and equal education." George Meany Memorial Archives/RG1-0027.

Introduction

This year's curriculum guide is structured rather differently from those published in recent years. It consists of three distinct sections. The articles in Part I focus on National History Day, offering information, suggestions, and ideas for both teachers and students new to the program. Each of the articles in Part II focuses on an aspect of using the Internet to conduct historical research or participate in National History Day. Part III presents several example topics, demonstrates how each relates to *Taking a Stand in History,* and examines how the topic might be studied within a classroom and/or used for an NHD project. For the sake of flexibility and individual adaptation, the guide offers "teaching activities" and discussion questions rather than fully developed lesson plans.

Part I: National History Day

Part I is comprised of a series of articles related to National History Day participation. The section begins with "What is National History Day?" to introduce the program, immediately followed by this year's theme narrative, "2006 Theme: Taking a Stand in History." Next, in "Motivating Through Metaphors: Helping Students Focus on National History Day Projects," Ohio teacher Marge Galloway writes about how she introduced her students to the idea of National History Day at the beginning of each school year. Ms. Galloway used National History Day with her students for more than a dozen years before her retirement in June 2004.

The next two essays are directed toward students, and teachers are encouraged to make copies and distribute these pieces to their students. Former NHD participant and 2004 NHD summer intern Whitney Hampson wrote "Choosing a Topic: Conflict Over Strategy in the American Equal Rights Association, 1866-1869." Using the history of the American Equal Rights Association as an extended example, Ms. Hampson takes students step by step from picking a topic and relating it to the theme of *Taking a Stand in History*, through writing a thesis statement. NHD national office staff member Bill Lickiss's article, "Help! I Have A Topic, Now Which Project Category Do I Choose?" takes students through their next big decision in an NHD project: which type of project should they do? Mr. Lickiss discusses various issues that students should consider before deciding whether to write a paper, create an exhibit or documentary, or do a performance for their NHD project.

Arizona teacher Celine Smith's article, "A Teacher's First Experience with National History Day," completes Part I of the guide. Ms. Smith writes about her first opportunity to introduce students to doing original research and working with primary sources. She continues by describing how later in the same school year she got her students involved with National History Day. She shares some of the challenges she faced as well as the successes achieved, and discusses her future plans to continue having students participate in NHD.

Part II: Internet Resources

The first article in this section, "Using the Internet as a Teacher's Aide," discusses pros and cons of the Internet. It talks about the vast resources available to students, teachers, and researchers, but balances this by discussing the difficulties inherent in assessing the validity and quality of websites—and the risks of plagiarism, accidental or otherwise. This essay guides teachers to several useful websites that contain background information about the Internet and the World Wide Web. It then identifies several websites that teachers might visit as they create classroom lessons related to research skills, writing, and plagiarism.

The other articles in this section highlight particular Internet sites that might be useful to teachers and/or their students as they participate in National History Day. Michael Edmonds writes about an 18,000-page website that he developed for the Wisconsin Historical Society, in "Using the Internet to Access Primary Sources: *American Journeys*." Anna Schwan of the German Information Center at the German Embassy writes about using the Internet to locate both primary and secondary sources for world history projects, in "Using the Internet to Research Non-U.S. History: The Fall of the Berlin Wall." Lee Ann Potter, Director of Education Programs at the National Archives and Records Administration, writes about the teacher resource component of the National Archives website, in "The Digital Classroom."

Part III: Topics and Theme

Part III provides three examples of topics that might be used in a 2005-2006 NHD project related to *Taking a Stand in History*. For each topic, exercises and/or discussion questions are included; teachers might use these essays and teaching activities in their classes, or students might consider them independently to gain insight into how best to proceed as they work on their own NHD projects. Kahlil Chism of the National Archives and Records Administration writes about how a woman tried to save the president in "Mary Benson Takes a Stand on Behalf of President Abraham Lincoln." In "One of the World's First International Humanitarian Movements: Taking a Stand Against Exploitation in the Congo," Maryland teacher Rebecca Fishburn discusses using a single source as a jumping-off point for more in-depth research and study. John Riley of the White House Historical Association talks about the perils of being First Lady in a time of racial hostility in "White House Tea and No Sympathy: the DePriest Incident," and in a companion piece, high school student Sarah Frese describes how she overcame difficulties in locating primary sources for an NHD project about the same topic. This section concludes with a list of several dozen sample topics.

How to keep history from getting old.

Students relate to history better when they understand how events of the past have affected their lives today.

National Council for the Social Studies publications feature a wide range of ideas for the history classroom, including lesson plans with reproducible primary documents (*Social Education's* award-winning Teaching with Documents column is one of our readers' favorites); advice on how to bring history alive through the use of oral histories, diaries, graphics, literature, and art; insights that enhance history teaching from geography, economics, civics, and the behavioral sciences; and resources to help your students look at history in a new way.

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National History Day

Suffragist parade, 1913. National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 208: Records of the Office of War Information, 1926–1951.

What is National History Day?

National History Day (NHD) provides an exciting way for students throughout the country to study and learn about historical issues, ideas, people, and events. Started in 1974 as a single day's local contest at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, National History Day soon became much more than a day. The first national contest took place in 1980. For many years now, it has been a year-long national education program that fosters academic achievement and intellectual growth in the youth of this country. NHD also offers curriculum materials and workshops for teachers, designed to facilitate excellence in the teaching of history in U.S. schools.

The student contests continue to make up the core of the National History Day program. As students research historical subjects, create entries, and compete in a series of district, state and national contests, they acquire useful historical knowledge and perspective and develop critical-thinking and problem-solving skills that will help them analyze information and make effective decisions in their future professional and personal lives.

National History Day programs currently operate in 48 states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, and the Department of Defense schools. All types of students get involved in NHD contests—public, private, parochial, and home-school students; urban, suburban, and rural students. Each year, an estimated 700,000 students participate in History Day contests. During its twenty-six year history, millions of students have participated in NHD and have gone on to careers in business, law, medicine, teaching, and countless other disciplines where they are putting into practice the skills and knowledge gained through their NHD experiences.

As part of its broader mission to enhance the quality of history education in the U.S., NHD sponsors an annual Summer Teacher Institute, with recent seminars focusing on *Media and Politics* (2004) and *Taking a Stand in History: Claiming Citizenship* (2005). Since 2001, NHD has been involved with two other major projects. In 2001, National History Day joined forces with the White House and the National Archives to launch a new three-year history, civics, and service education initiative titled *Our Documents*. *Our Documents* revolves around digitalization of 100 milestone documents in American history, from the Lee Resolution of 1776 to the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and it encourages all Americans to participate in our democracy. In a 2003 project funded by the U.S. Institute of Museum & Library Services, the Wisconsin Historical Society and NHD worked together to create *American Journeys*, a website that contains 18,000 pages of primary source documents related to exploration and settlement in America from Eric the Red up to shortly before the Civil War. NHD produced accompanying Teacher Sourcebooks for both projects.

How does the National History Day contest work?

The NHD program-year begins in the summer, when NHD Coordinators and teachers begin to get curriculum and contest materials for the next school year. In many states and

districts, teachers are invited to workshops where they share ideas about how to most effectively address the year's theme. They also receive bibliographies and other resources.

Teachers then introduce the program to their students, who, in turn, choose and start researching their topics. Each year, National History Day uses a new theme; the 2006 theme is *Taking a Stand in History: People, Ideas and Events.* The themes are intentionally broad enough that students can select topics from any place (local, national, or world history) and any time period. Once students choose their topics, they investigate historical context, significance, and relationship to the theme by conducting extensive primary and secondary research. After analyzing and interpreting information, students present findings in one of seven categories: individual paper, individual or group exhibit (similar to a museum exhibit), individual or group performance (a dramatic portrayal of the topic), or individual or group documentary (usually a slide show, video, or non-interactive computer program). Groups consist of two to five students.

NHD has two divisions: the junior division (grades 6-8) and the senior division (grades 9-12). Some states also sponsor contests for students in grades 4 and 5.

District NHD contests are held in February or March. District winners then prepare for and compete at the state contests, usually held in April or early May. The top two finalists in each category at the state contest become eligible to advance to the national contest, held each June at the University of Maryland at College Park. For more information regarding rules and procedures, or for more extensive descriptions of categories, please go to **www.nhd.org**.

Top entries receive prizes. National and state contests award special prizes for projects in topic areas such as African-American history, women's history, regional history, and use of an historical site. At the national contest, first-, second-, and third-place winners in each category receive cash prizes. The NHD Grand Prize is a four-year, full-tuition scholarship to Case Western Reserve University.

2006 Theme: Taking a Stand in History

During the 2005-2006 school year, National History Day invites students to research topics related to the theme *Taking a Stand in History: People, Ideas, Events*. As is the case each year, the theme is broad enough to encourage investigation of topics ranging from local to world history, and from ancient times to the recent past. To understand the historical importance of their topics, students need to ask questions about time, place, and context; cause and effect; change over time; and impact and significance. They ought to consider not only when and where events happened, but also why they occurred, what factors contributed to their development, and what effects they had on broader history. In other words, NHD projects should go beyond mere description to include analysis of information and conclusions about how the topic influenced and was influenced by other people, ideas, and events.

For National History Day projects, students must also tie their topics to the theme. For 2005-2006 NHD projects, this means that students need to define the sense in which their topics relate to *Taking a Stand in History.* A recent Internet Google search of the phrase "taking a stand" generated 278,000 web hits, and adding "history" to the phrase only brought the number down to about 86,000; clearly there are a number of different ways students might approach this task. The most obvious topic choice is to select one individual or a small group of individuals who took a stand, or to pick a specific event in which people took a stand. A second possibility is to look at a topic involving intellectual or ideological issues; to get a grasp on such a topic, a student might find it useful to hone in on how a particular political or social movement or organization expressed and acted on ideas. A third alternative is to consider the strategy and methods used to take a stand in a particular situation.

People or Events

Examples abound of individuals who took a stand in history or events in which people took a stand for something they believed. Students may identify people who are known only locally or who are relatively obscure, such as Mrs. Jesse DePriest, the first black woman to have tea at the White House, or they may turn to nationally and internationally famous figures from history like South African President Nelson Mandela. Similarly, students might choose to focus on a little-known local or regional incident such as the 1919 Indiana, Pennsylvania coal strike, or they may choose a topic such as the Fall of the Berlin Wall that had national or worldwide impact and is mentioned in their history textbooks.

The biggest challenge for students who focus on specific people or events is to move beyond biography and description. Students might use an overarching question about **why** people took their stand to keep the project focused on context and historical significance. Most reasons for taking a stand can be assigned to one of the following three categories: taking an *ideological stand* to speak out about beliefs and opinions; taking a *defensive stand* against something perceived to be a personal threat or public menace; or taking a *protective* stand on behalf

Grape/lettuce boycotters picket the Jewel Food Store. National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 412: Records of the Environmental Protection Agency, 1944 – 1999.

of another person or group of people who are unable to defend themselves. Rarely will students find a definitive answer to this question, so they will have to defend their answer. Focus questions can effectively guide students to the analysis and drawing of conclusions that contribute to a successful NHD project.

Ideas

Selecting a topic related to issues or ideology will lead a student to emphasize the ideas component of this year's theme. Perhaps a student might look at a reform movement (for example, the early American women's suffrage movement or the more recent movement to return rights and land to aboriginal peoples in Australia), or examine shifts in thinking about religion, economics, political thought or even a combination (for example, the intersection of civil rights reform and the labor movement in twentieth century America). The student exploring an ideological topic will want to research the underlying issues, contrasting views about those issues, and the people involved in the movement.

This year's theme also offers students the rather unusual opportunity to explore the concept that not making a decision is actually a passive form of choice: the choice of inaction. A student might choose an NHD topic involving a situation where a person or group failed to take a stand when they might reasonably have been expected to act. For example, what were the circumstances leading to Pope Pius XII's decision not to oppose Adolph Hitler before and during World War II, and how did his inaction influence subsequent events? Or how did labor leader Terrance Powderly's refusal to take a stand in the 1886 Chicago Haymarket Riot affect the future of the Knights of Labor and other aspects of the labor movement in the United States?

Strategies or Methods

In the third approach, rather than focusing on people, events, or ideological issues, students might choose as their NHD topics the type of method or strategy used to take a stand. In some situations, people literally took a stand—the witness stand—by testifying in a court of law. An excellent example of this is Mary Benson, a woman who tried to warn the government of a plot to assassinate President Abraham Lincoln and who later testified in the conspiracy trial. Other ways of taking a stand include writing letters to public officials; publishing articles and editorials in newspapers, magazines, and elsewhere; lobbying political leaders; or lecturing or speaking out in a variety of public forums. An individual might even take a stand by running for public office, so that after getting elected they can work in support of their favored causes. Participating in mass action, whether through strikes, sit-ins, demonstrations, or marches, is another method that could provide possible NHD topics related to *Taking a Stand in History.* Last but not least, violent forms of taking a stand (e.g., fighting for one's country in a war, or participating in a riot to protest existing conditions) offer other possible topics.

Another aspect of looking at strategies is to examine the scope and geographical focus. Was this an effort to effect change nationally, or was the stand related to local issues and/or local changes? Who was involved in taking the stand—was it one person acting alone or a few people acting together? Looking at how a group of people managed to take a stand, even when group members were separated by miles and language can provide students with fascinating avenues of analysis. For example, students could examine how divergent individuals and groups of people worked together to protest the human rights abuses in the Congo in the early 1900s. Often it is just as important to understand *how* people took a stand as it is to discover why they did so.

History's Relevance

As with any NHD theme, this topic presents students with many fascinating opportunities to explore history and to learn to use a wide range of primary and secondary sources. This year's theme also offers teachers an excellent entry into philosophical discussions about personal action and responsibility. What does it mean to take a stand? When should one take a stand, and what form should that stand take? Are there situations where one is expected to take a stand? What are the possible risks and consequences that can result from taking a stand? These questions and the answers they provoke allow students to learn about themselves through the study of the past, and help reveal history's relevance to those who may not immediately be interested in studying the subject.

George Meany Memorial Archives

The George Meany Memorial Archives, located at 10000 New Hampshire Avenue in Silver Spring, Maryland, is the official repository for the historical records of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO). The AFL-CIO, a voluntary federation of sixty national and international labor unions representing thirteen million workers, is committed to heightening awareness of the important roles that working men, women, and children have played in our country's history.

The AFL-CIO sponsors National History Day's Labor History Award, presented annually at the national competition to the best senior division entry that interprets labor history. The student(s) must research at least one person, place, event, object, or tenet (e.g., organized or unorganized workers; skilled or unskilled workers; racial, gender, or class exclusion; or solidarity, etc.) in labor history and analyze the topic's past and present impact. The entry should bring public awareness to workers' history and to resources available for the further exploration of the subject.

Main website: **www.georgemeany.org/archives/home.html**

Student website: **www.georgemeany.org/archives/students.html**

Telephone: 301-431-5451

Motivating Through Metaphors: Helping Students Focus on National History Day Projects

Marge Galloway, Teacher, Ohio

*Students gain many benefits from participating in National History Day, but the program often sounds daunting to students when a teacher first introduces it. In this essay, an experienced NHD teacher shares some of the stories and techniques that worked well in her classes.—*EDITOR

During the last twelve years of my middle school teaching career, I encouraged my students to do National History Day projects, and I saw a marked increase in student achievement each year. I watched students become actively involved in history, develop expertise in one specific topic, learn the importance of primary sources, and hone their writing skills. I also observed that many students found the idea of the project overwhelming, with its need for depth, breadth and a sustained effort over several months.

Over the years, my students were able to produce better work as I learned to more effectively guide them. Starting early is key. When students arrived on the first day of school, they found a bulletin board about NHD already waiting for them. I introduced NHD and the year's theme in early September, because I knew that finding the right topic takes time.

It is also critical to give students the skills and structure they will need to complete the project. Right away, at the very beginning of the school year, I started to teach the various skills required for an NHD project: narrowing a topic, searching for sources in the library and on the Internet, evaluating Internet sources, understanding and avoiding the perils of plagiarism, and making research note cards and bibliography cards. By early October, I distributed a step-by-step timeline of due dates to help students anticipate and schedule upcoming tasks and plan their work. I reserved numerous blocks of library/computer lab time for my class, and both the librarian and I gave assistance and direction as needed.

Even with my best efforts, I realized that students often felt anxious about a project of this magnitude. To assuage their initial concerns, after I introduced them to the idea of NHD (through videos) I took the whole class on a very brief "field trip." We left the classroom and walked to the bottom of a stairway in the school building. I asked them, "How would you get from here back upstairs to our classroom if you could only take one step?" They offered many creative suggestions but eventually concluded that this would be humanly impossible to do. Then I asked, "How would you get back to the classroom if you could touch every step?" They quickly declared that this would be easy, even for a student carrying a 40-pound backpack!

We returned to the classroom and discussed how the stairway was like a National History Day project. It would be manageable if they took it one step at a time. Students who concentrated on each step and didn't worry about subsequent steps until they got there would achieve their goals and complete an NHD project successfully. When a student showed renewed signs of anxiety, I would remind them of the steps.

Another challenge for students is the need to do a thorough job at each phase of their National History Day projects. Students often asked, "Mrs. Galloway, do I **have** to read **all** those

An NHD student reenacts the first flight of the Wright brothers.

books? Do I **have** to go back to the library and do more research, if I already have four sources? Do I **have** to take notes and make outlines?" In answer, I talked with them about baking chocolate chip cookies from scratch. I described the following scenario: I set out to bake a batch of chocolate chip cookies. The recipe calls for two cups of flour, but I find I have only one cup. I decide to go on anyway, thinking that no one will notice the difference. Then I discover that while the recipe calls for 1 cup of butter, I only have 2/3 cup. I use 1/3 cup of sugar instead of the ¾ cup listed in the recipe. I only have one of two eggs needed. Worst of all, I get to the last step – adding in the chocolate chips – and I have only three chips left in the bag. I continue and combine the ingredients anyway, hoping the shortages will go unnoticed.

I asked the students what they thought. They immediately responded, "Yuk! Those would taste awful. Why didn't you go out to the store and buy what you needed? You should have gotten out your ingredients before you started cooking!" I asked, "Would it have been okay if I had everything except the second cup of flour? How about if I was missing part of the sugar and half the flour but the rest of the ingredients were there? After some discussion, students concluded that without **all** the necessary basic ingredients, the cookies would not be tasty and delicious. Completing the metaphor, we agreed that students had to include all the basic ingredients—good sources, worthwhile and thorough notes about those sources, drafts and revisions of their papers, scripts, or exhibits, etc.—in their NHD projects, as well.

Margaret Galloway retired in June 2004 after 24 years of teaching middle school in Bexley, Ohio. She used NHD with her 7th and 8th grade PACE students (PACE is the Bexley City Schools program for academically gifted students) each year for the last 12 years she was in the classroom. Forty to sixty of her students participated in Ohio State History Day contests each year, and a total of eleven of her students made it to National Contests.

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Choosing a Topic: Conflict Over Strategy in the American Equal Rights Association, 1866-1869

Whitney Hampson, Student, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

For Students

So you have decided to do National History Day? Great! Now you face several more big decisions. Over the next few months, you have to select your topic, develop a thesis, and explain how your topic and thesis relate to this year's National History Day theme. You have to determine what kinds of sources to use and where to find them, and figure out the appropriate historical context for your project. And of course, you have to do the research and actually put together your project, but that goes beyond the scope of this article.

Luckily, you now have an experienced guide (me) to help you get started. In this article, I will take you through my thinking, step-by-step, as I begin to put together a National History Day project. On the way, I will explain things like what a thesis is, and the differences between primary and secondary sources. I will also discuss how to connect a topic to the theme, and how to frame the historical context for your project. Pretty soon, you will find that you are thinking and talking like a historian, and impressing your teachers, your judges, and even yourself!

Picking a Topic

The first thing you need to do is pick your topic. At this point, it is a good idea to start a notebook or a binder, and as you think of things, write all of your ideas and thoughts about your National History Day project in it. There are many issues to consider. You may have to select something related to what you are studying in school. If you are taking an early American history class, you may have to choose a topic related to American history before the Civil War. Or your world history teacher may say your topic has to be about 19th century France.

Even if your teacher limits your choice of topic to a particular time or place, you still want to think about what types or parts of history interest you most and how your topic can relate to the theme—this year's is *Taking a Stand in History: People, Ideas, Events.* Ask yourself, "What **kind** of history interests me?" History is a very broad discipline, and there are countless different aspects of the past that you might explore. Are you fascinated by political history—by stories about governments and presidents, kings and queens? Or do you love military history, which means studying battles, weapons, wars, and military leaders? Social history focuses on "the masses"—examining how ordinary people lived and worked, and how different groups of people treated each other. If you want to understand people's thinking, you might tackle a topic in intellectual history (ideas, beliefs, values, world views), or cultural history (how people shaped and were shaped by their culture, art, or music). There is even a branch of history that might interest you if you prefer science to social studies—the history of science and technology.

Another question you should ask yourself is, "Do I want to research something I already know a lot about, or do I want to explore something completely new?" It is usually a better idea

to pick a topic that you have studied at least briefly, so you don't have to start entirely from scratch. You will be able to more quickly identify the context for your project and figure out how it can tie into the History Day theme for the year.

Finally, remember this credo: the narrower, the better! You will find it easier to research and analyze a narrow, well-defined topic than one that is overly general or too large. Furthermore, a more specific topic will be help you stay within the word, size and time requirements for National History Day entries.

So what topic will I pick? I have studied a lot about American history and find that I am especially interested in protest movements. I have discovered that I like to have an unusual topic, however, so I try to think about aspects of protest movements that few other students are likely to choose. I remember that when I was learning about the abolition and women's rights movements leading up to and during the Civil War, I read something about those groups splitting off from each other within a few years of the war's end. This sounds promising; certainly both of those groups stood up and fought for their beliefs, plus it is a specific enough topic that I should be able to explore it within the size or time limits of my NHD project. It is settled; I will look at women's rights groups and Black rights groups just after the Civil War. I am one step closer to the finished product!

Developing a Thesis and Writing a Thesis Statement

The next step is probably the most difficult one: deciding on a *thesis* and connecting your topic and thesis to the History Day theme. The thesis is what you will try to prove in your project. Historians don't just write down a list of events or describe everything that happened. They examine and analyze historical evidence and then draw conclusions about causes (why something happened), effects (results, legacy), and significance (importance, meaning). In other words, they develop a thesis (argument) and then demonstrate why their thesis is correct.

Don't confuse topic and thesis. A topic is the time, place, and type of history you are exploring, but it does not indicate anything about your theories or conclusions. A concise *thesis statement* of one to three sentences should appear at the beginning of your process paper, in your History Day project, or both. The thesis statement should say *why* or *how* you think something related to your topic happened. The thesis gives focus to your research and your project. After the initial thesis statement, the rest of your project should support, explain, discuss and prove your thesis.

Spend some time writing a strong, clear thesis statement. Sometimes it is easy to put the words of the theme directly in your thesis statement, although you might find it works better to explain it using different words. Another hint: don't make the theme the end of your thesis statement. In other words, don't choose as your thesis statement that, "Martin Luther King, Jr. took a stand against racism." Instead, use the theme as a person's action that caused something else

Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, c1880-1902. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

to happen. A much better thesis would be, "Because Martin Luther King, Jr. took a stand against racism, he became the media's spokesperson for the United States civil rights movement and helped the movement gain popular support and ultimate success." In one sentence, you explain why your subject is important, how it relates to the theme, and what your project will prove.

So to come up with my thesis, I think about how my topic relates to the theme. I know that in the years leading up to the Civil War, many women were active in the abolitionist movement. Conversely, many of the men and women who had supported the abolitionist movement before the Civil War joined both of the civil rights movements of the rest of the 19th century. They worked towards rights and freedoms for Black people during Reconstruction, and they also sought women's suffrage (the right to vote) and other ways for women to enjoy equality with men. It makes sense to me that the people in these two movements would have worked together, since both seem to have been working towards similar goals of justice and equality for all people, but I don't understand why the two movements separated. Why would they have split apart, and how might the answer to that question relate to the theme of *Taking a Stand in History*?

I go back to my notes from American history classes to try to remember what happened. I also browse a little on the Internet, to see if I can find anything interesting there. I discover that in 1866, a group that called itself the American Equal Rights Association (AERA) formed. The AERA's goal was to link the fight for women's rights with ongoing efforts to gain rights for Black people. Although its founders came from both movements, it was mostly those from the pre-war women's movement who spearheaded the organization. The group only lasted for about three years. Maybe if I use this organization's history as a *case study*—looking at one particular example to understand a broader theme—I can make sure that the topic is manageable, that I will be able to find enough information and sources about the subject, and that I can convincingly tie the topic to the theme.

CALL FOR THE

FIRST ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

AMERICAN EQUAL RIGHTS ASSOCIATION.

THE first Annual Meeting of the AMERICAN EQUAL RIGHTS ASSOCIATION will be held in the City of New York, at the Church of the Puritans, on Thursday and Friday, the 9th and 10th of May next, commencing on Thursday morning, at 10 o'clock.

The object of this Association is to "secure Equal Rights to all American citizens, especially the Right of Suffrage, irrespective of race, color or sex."

American Democracy has interpreted the Declaration of Independence in the interest of slavery, restricting suffrage and citizenship to a *white male minority*.

The black man is still denied the crowning right of citizenship, even in the nominally free States, though the fires of civil war have melted the chains of chatticism, and a hundred battle-fields attest his courage and patriotism.

Half our population are disfranchised on the ground of sex; and though compelled to obey the law and taxed to support the government, they have no voice in the legislation of the country.

This Association, then, has a mission to perform, the magnitude and importance of which cannot be over-estimated.

The recent war has unsettled all our governmental foundations. Let us see that in their restoration, all these unjust proscriptions are avoided. Let Democracy be defined anew, as *the government of the people*, AND FOR WHOLE PEOPLE.

Let the gathering, then, at this anniversary be, in numbers and character, worthy, in some degree, the demands of the hour. The black man, even the black soldier, is yet but half emancipated, nor will he be, until full suffrage and citizenship *are secured to him in the Federal Consti-*

Title page. **Proceedings of the first anniversary of the American Equal Rights Association, held at the Church of the Puritans, New York, May 9 and 10, 1867.** ***Phonographic report by H.M. Parkhurst. New York: R.J. Johnston, printer, 1867. National American Woman Suffrage Association Collection, Library of Congress.***

I start looking for information on AERA. I don't find much at first, but then I discover that the minutes of their annual meetings are published in the second volume of Elizabeth Cady Stanton's *History of Woman Suffrage*.[1] From looking through these briefly, and from reviewing other secondary sources, I learn that the organization fell apart over the question of whose rights they should pursue first: those of Black people or of women. The movement to increase rights and equality for former slaves and other Blacks already had quite a bit of momentum. Some members felt that AERA should use that existing energy to focus initially on gaining even more rights for the Black population. They believed such an approach was more likely to be successful in the short run, and they worried that working for women's rights at the same time would diminish support for their cause. They feared that, as a result, neither Blacks nor women would benefit. In contrast, other AERA members argued that they should not delay the fight for women's rights. They felt that the political environment of the Reconstruction Era supported reform generally. Like the other half of the organization, they wanted to build on the momentum in the Black rights movement, but they wanted to use that energy to bring attention to and create support for equal rights for women, white and Black, similar to recent improvements in conditions for Black males. The AERA meeting minutes show that from the very beginning of the organization's existence, there was a great deal of bickering and conflict that only got worse over time. By 1869, when AERA dissolved, the two factions not only disagreed, but had become hostile towards each other.

Now that I have some idea of what happened, I can start thinking about my thesis. How did taking a stand lead to the downfall of AERA? At the beginning, both groups agreed that they wanted to reach ultimate goals of equal rights for all women and all Black people. They

[1] Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Matilda Joslyn Gage, eds., *The History of Woman Suffrage*, Volume II, 1861-1876 (New York: Fowler & Wells, 1882; reprinted by Source Book Press, 1970).

disagreed on how to do this. Each segment of the group was convinced that their approach was the only way that they could achieve these goals. Both groups, therefore, felt compelled to stand up for their preferred strategy. This caused a confrontation that became so heated by the end of the organization's life that leaders of the two movements felt they could no longer even work with each other.

After some thought and reworking, I come up with a working thesis: "The American Equal Rights Association joined together those in the Black rights movement and the women's rights movement; although these groups sought common goals of equal rights for all, they disagreed entirely on the best strategy to follow. Because both sets of leaders—those who wanted to focus initially on winning additional rights for Blacks, and those who wanted to work simultaneously towards greater opportunities for Black people and women—believed passionately that their approach was better, the AERA collapsed after a few short years." I call this my *working thesis* because I know I can change it as I learn more. However, it looks like a good start!

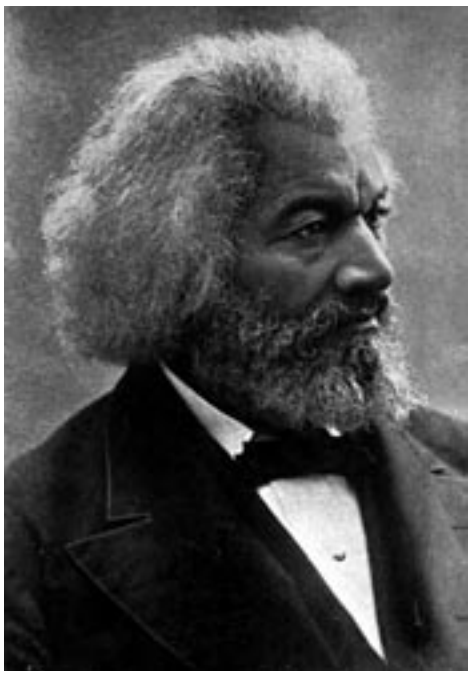
As you can probably tell, I already know quite a bit about this period of American history. Even so, I had to review my notes and do more research before I could develop a strong thesis. If you are exploring a topic that is entirely new to you, you will need do a fair amount of research before you decide on your thesis; even if you are already familiar with the topic, you might need to research in order to understand your topic as it relates to the theme. Whether you start out knowing about your topic or select a new one, it is time to return to the library!

Research

Anyone who has participated in National History Day will tell you that research is both the best and the hardest part of working on a project. You will spend the bulk of your time doing research. There are two main types of sources you will use: *primary sources*, and *secondary sources*. A *primary source* is anything written or made by someone who was personally involved in whatever history you are studying. Primary sources include diary entries, recorded oral histories (interviews) with participants, laws, and newspaper articles reporting the current events of the time. In contrast, *secondary sources* are created by outsiders, people who were not part of the event or situation and who look at primary sources and then interpret them. Your project is an example of a secondary source. Many of the books, journal articles, and encyclopedia entries that you will use in your research are also secondary sources. This may surprise you, but an interview with a historian is another type of *secondary* source.

Even though you might think you should look at primary sources first, that is not true. It is usually best to start research by looking at secondary sources. Knowing how scholars and writers interpret primary sources about your topic will help you understand them.

Secondary sources are also excellent for helping you to understand how your small topic fits into the bigger picture of history. This is called placing your subject in *context*. Context is

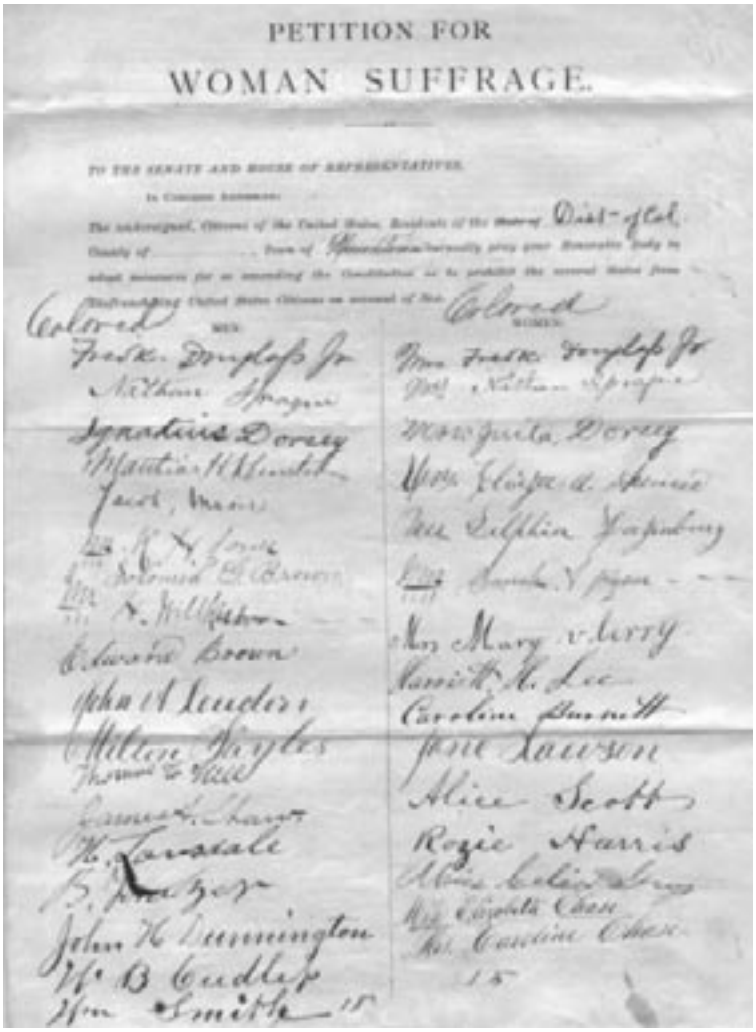


Portrait of Frederick Douglass, from the front page of* Frederick Douglass Funeral March *(sheet music), by N. Clark Smithe. Library of Congress, Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Alfred Whital Stern Collection of Lincolniana.

absolutely critical to a strong National History Day project. Why? History is about why things make other things happen. If you look only at your tiny chunk of the past, you miss learning about things that happened earlier or in other parts of the world that shaped your subject. Also, you won't be able to see how your topic influenced things that came later or to understand the significance of your topic.

I start off looking for secondary sources. First, I go to the local public library. Looking through the shelves, I find several useful-looking books on both the women's rights movement and the Black rights movement. I look at the title and table of contents of each one to try to decide if they might really be helpful. A couple of the books turn out to be about the civil rights movement and the women's movement of the 20th century, which will not be useful to me. The others, though, talk about my time period: a few books contain articles on the subject, one is a large encyclopedic book about all of the protest movements in the time period, and the rest are *monographs* (historical books on a single topic, as opposed to long histories of an entire century, or narratives that tell history like a story). One book is specifically about the abolitionist movement; most of the others are about either the 19th century women's movement or the 19th century Black rights movement, and one presents a history of Black women in America which may give me information on both movements. I know that I won't be able to include all of the information I find in my finished project, but I still take all the books because they will help me understand the broader historical context and may include some hidden gems of information. I may only briefly mention the abolitionist movement in my finished project, for example, but the book about it will help me understand how the two movements ended up where they were during my time period.

To find more secondary sources, I look in the bibliographies of the books that I checked out. One is fairly old, from the 1970s, but the other two are fairly recent, and they point me to more useful books. Since my local library does not have them, I go to a nearby university library. Sometimes you will not be able to check out materials that look interesting, so you should learn to take really good notes! Always remember to write down the title, author, and publication


PETITION FOR

WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Colored

Colored

Petition for Woman Suffrage Signed by Frederick Douglass, Jr. National Archives and Records Administration, Records of the U.S. House of Representatives, Record Group 233.

information on anything you read, and make sure you know what idea comes from what source. Write down page numbers where you find information, so you can cite your sources correctly. You will continue researching at the library often, until the very end of your work on the project.

Once I feel like I understand my topic and am pretty sure that my thesis makes sense, then I start looking for primary sources. It could be rather difficult to find primary sources related to a topic like this, since it is about a fairly obscure organization, but there are still plenty of ways to find primary sources. I first look again in my libraries for *sourcebooks* (books that contain primary sources). Sourcebooks can be very helpful, especially if they are *annotated* (have commentary and explanations written by the author or editor). For my topic, I find a book of the writings of Frederick Douglass, who was an important player in AERA.

Museums and archives are wonderful places to find primary sources and experts to interview, but there aren't any museums in my part of the U.S. that contain useful information about my topic; this is where the Internet becomes useful. There are many, many online archives just waiting to be discovered. Some are online mirrors of actual museums, and some exist only online as "virtual exhibits." Some websites have "full text" versions of sources, while others just give you information about how to get reproductions of their sources. Some let you see the original images of documents, while others only provide a *transcript* (the words are typed in modern English so you get the meaning). Though the language and the way people wrote in the 1860s will sound and look familiar, that would not be the case if I was researching something from 16th century England. I would need to find transcripts that translated texts

from Old English to modern English! I find websites of the National Women's History Museum (**www.nwmh.org**) and a number of Black history museums, which I will explore as I research the project.

Research takes a lot of time. You will return to sources again and again, and each time you will learn something more from them. As you create your project, your understanding of the subject will keep broadening. Don't worry if your original thesis changes dramatically. Just keep going back to your sources and making sure your thesis statement and argument still make sense. As you put your project together, make it clear how much you have drawn from both primary and secondary sources, and revise or refine your thesis statement to reflect the new information and understanding you have gained.

I Sell the Shadow to Support the Substance. ***Portrait of Sojourner Truth, c1864. Gladstone collection, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division (LC-USZC4-6165 DLC).***

Conclusion

To create a successful National History Day entry, you still have other decisions and work ahead of you. What type of entry will you do—a paper, a performance, a documentary, or an exhibit? Will you work alone or with a group? What special skills, equipment, or knowledge do you need to complete your project? And so on. While all of these issues are important, remember that *history* needs to be at the heart of your project. You will be well on your way to an excellent National History Day entry if you follow the steps outlined in this essay: carefully select a topic; develop a strong thesis that links to NHD's theme for the year, write your thesis statement in two to three sentences that link to the theme, and support the thesis throughout your project; place your topic in an appropriate context and keep focused on that context; do extensive research in a variety of primary and secondary sources; and analyze the information you gather for historical significance.

Whitney Hampson first became involved with National History Day in 1998 when she was a high school freshman in Colorado Springs, Colorado. She participated in NHD and reached state level in each of her four years of high school. Whitney was an NHD summer intern in 2004. She is currently a senior history major at Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) in Indiana, Pennsylvania, and is interested in the history of gender and sexuality in America.

Help! I Have A Topic, Now Which Project Category Do I Choose?

Bill Lickiss, National History Day

For Students

*While research and historical analysis lie at the heart of any NHD project, presentation also plays a major part. Once a student has decided to participate in National History Day and identified a topic of interest, the next step is to figure out what type of project to pursue. This decision can be trickier than students might think. They should look at their own interests but also need to consider several other issues. In this essay, NHD alumnus Bill Lickiss discusses this decision in general terms and then shares information about his own experiences and choices from his five years as an NHD student participant.—*EDITOR

General Discussion

Early in the process of working on your National History Day (NHD) entry, you will have to select which category of project you want to do: an exhibit, a documentary, a paper, or a performance. For all categories except papers, you also will have to decide whether you want to work by yourself or as part of a group. You will want to base your choices on four main factors: your own preference, the nature of your topic, access to necessary resources, and your teacher's requirements and advice.

Personal Preferences and Strengths. First, consider your own interests and skills. Are you a good writer? If so, a paper might be a good choice. Do you love getting up and performing in front of people? Then a performance may be the way to go. Do you take photographs every chance you get; are you fascinated by computer technology; or do you enjoy creating videos using programs such as *iMovie*? A yes answer to one or more of these questions suggests doing a documentary. If museum or visual displays fascinate you, choose the exhibit category.

Similarly, evaluate your own strengths and weaknesses in deciding whether to do an individual project or be part of a group. Do you do your best work when you work alone? That might lead you to doing a paper or an individual project in another category. Conversely, if working together and exchanging ideas with other people stimulates your thinking and creativity, you might be better off doing a group entry.

Whatever you decide, be as realistic as you can. For example, if you love being around friends but realize that you accomplish and learn more when you work alone, maybe you will have a more successful NHD project if you do an individual project. Or if the people you would like to work with on a group project live too far away and transportation would cause difficulties, again, an individual project might be a better choice. Be aware of the logistics of your particular category and select a project category accordingly.

Nature of Topic. Next, make sure that your topic and the category fit well together. If your project is about art history, you will probably want to present your ideas visually; therefore, you would be better off participating in the exhibit or documentary category rather than writing a

paper. If your topic is related to ancient history where very few visual images will be available to you, a paper or performance will probably be a better choice. What if your personal preferences are at odds with the topic you are exploring? You might want to consider researching a different subject or modifying the topic so the category will match. If you really want to do that topic, however, you should probably pick a different category—it would be a shame to waste your research efforts in a category that doesn't allow you to showcase what you have discovered!

Available Resources. You also need to think about whether you have or will be able to get the necessary *resources* for the particular project category. Resources include materials (such as photographs, costumes, or video clips), equipment (like computers, tape recorders, or cameras), and the skills and technical knowledge to use the equipment or design and construct whatever you need for the particular type of project. If your access to materials and equipment is limited, a paper might be the best choice; however, you should also consider the possibility of doing a performance if those resources are scarce. An effective, successful performance does not have to be fancy or complicated with a big set or many props, as long as you focus on researching your topic thoroughly, writing a strong script, and then polishing your delivery.

For the other two categories, you will probably need some additional materials and

The Exhibit Category

- Do I like going to museums and looking at how displays are put together? Have I wanted to tell someone at a museum that they could change a few things to make their displays a little better?
- Do I have access to the materials and tools needed to make an exhibit that will be at most 6' tall, 40" wide and 30" deep? Do I have the skills to build the exhibit?
- Can I find visuals to illustrate my topic, such as maps, timelines, and photographs?
- Can I artistically arrange words and pictures in an exhibit?
- Are there people I can interview who will give me quotes to place on the board? Will I be able to find more quotes in other primary or secondary sources?
- Is creating an exhibit the best way to show off my topic? Why or why not?

The Documentary Category

- Am I interested in using computers, cameras, and various other technologies?
- Can I conduct ***and record*** interviews (for the purpose of including clips in the documentary) for my topic?
- Can I find video clips to use in my documentary?
- Are there enough still photographs related to my topic that I can use in my documentary? (While there is no set number of photographs, remember that you want to fill the entire ten minutes with material!)
- Do I have access to equipment that will be needed to make a documentary (such as computers with video editing programs, cameras, scanners, and recording devices)?
- Is creating a documentary the best way to show off my topic? Why or why not?

technical skills. For example, do you have or can you get the materials and tools you will need to build an exhibit? For a documentary, do you have access to computers, video programs, and/or cameras? Do you already know how to use the tools and equipment, or do you have enough time to learn how to use them? Without access to the right kinds of resources, despite your best efforts, exhibits and documentaries can be extremely frustrating.

Teacher's Advice. Lastly, you should consider your teacher's interests, preferences, or strengths. You need to ask yourself several questions. What categories does your teacher suggest, and why? If you want to do a project in a different category, will your teacher be able to help you, or do you know another teacher or adult who can act as your mentor in the technical aspects of the project? Will your teacher support your efforts to do a type of project outside his or her area of expertise? Is your teacher willing to work with you on the research and then assist you in finding someone else to help you with other tasks? Remember, though, that your teacher probably has good reasons for steering you in the direction of one category over another, and in the end, you and your teacher must agree on the category you have selected.

You will need to balance all of these issues as you decide what type of NHD project to do. For example, if the topic and project type do not go together, you might want to select a different type of project; alternatively, you could modify the topic so that it better matches your preferred category. If the idea of writing a script for a performance intrigues you, but you realize you do not have enough time to write a script, memorize it, **and** rehearse the performance, use your writing skills for a paper this year—and plan to do a performance next year. If you want to create a documentary but your teacher is urging students to do papers, you could compromise by working on an exhibit that would still let you present your ideas visually but would not require the same level of technical expertise as a documentary. Eventually, you want to select the category that will give you the most positive, successful NHD experience.

The Paper Category

- Do I like to write/want to write a paper?
- Can I present my information effectively without using many graphics or visual images?
- Is writing a paper the best way to show off my topic and research? Why or why not?

My Experiences

Personal experience taught me how important it is to think carefully about these issues. The first year I participated in NHD, I did what I wanted without really thinking about how my decision would carry through to the final product. I considered only my own skills, abilities, interests, and preferences. It was not until my second year that I began to realize I also needed to consider my teacher's suggestions, and to look at the relationship between the topic and type of project I wanted to do.

My First NHD Project. My eighth grade social studies teacher, Ms. Grantham, required us to do a research project. Little did I realize at the time that this was her way of introducing us to NHD. The theme that year (1992) was *Communication in History: The Key to Understanding*. Ms. Grantham provided the class with a list of "Suggested Topics," and from that list, I picked Johannes Gutenberg and his invention of the printing press.

I found lots of information about Gutenberg and his invention, and it was quite easy to connect my topic to the theme of *Communication in History.* I learned that the printing press revolutionized the way people communicated. Before the printing press, books were rare and quite expensive, since each copy of a book, pamphlet, or other written document had to be produced one at a time and entirely by hand. Once the printing press was created, people could make multiple copies of documents at once. Information traveled faster and farther than ever before, and people gained increased access to the printed word. The secondary sources I looked at informed me that the printing press's greatest historical impact was in spreading Christianity; the first book that Gutenberg printed was the *Bible.*

Since Gutenberg lived in the 15th century and invented the printing press in 1436, centuries before there was such a thing as photography, my biggest difficulty was to find primary sources, especially pictures and visual images that I might use in a project. My teacher urged me to do a paper or performance, but I chose not to follow her advice. I knew that I enjoyed using and learning about technology, and I liked to work by myself so I decided to enter the category that was then called Individual "Media" (now the "Documentary" category). My project used relatively simple technology, based on slides. I only found eight images, and made a slide of each. With only eight slides, my video was very short: I used only six of the available ten minutes. In retrospect, it is not surprising that my entry did not go beyond the school level.

The downfall to my entry was not the topic or lack of research; rather, it was the category I chose. Looking back, I now realize that I would have been better off if I had picked any of the other categories. If I had written a paper, I could have quoted from Gutenberg's publications and discussed the impact his invention had on communication. Alternatively, I might have done a performance portraying Gutenberg and a modern day publisher. Those eight images, when combined with quotes from Gutenberg's writings, could also have made a more effective exhibit than the slide show I produced. While it is important to choose both a topic and a category that you like, it is also critical to choose a category that goes well with your topic.

The next year, I started high school. I learned that my school did not offer NHD as part of its curriculum, but I knew I wanted to participate again. I went back to Ms. Grantham, and she continued to act as my NHD mentor for the next four years. Each year, for many of the same reasons I chose the "Media" category in eighth grade, I did an Individual Media entry. My ninth grade NHD experience was slightly more successful, and I made it to the county (what most states call "district") contest. In tenth through twelfth grades, I made it to the state contest each year, and twice I went on to the national contest.

My Final NHD Project. The last time I participated as a student in NHD was my senior year of high school. The theme that year (1996) was *Taking a Stand in History: Individuals,*

The Performance Category

- Do I like to show off for my friends, or am I part of my school's drama club?
- Are there enough primary and secondary sources for me to create an effective and original ten-minute long script?
- Do I have the creative writing skills to produce an original script?
- Will I be able to create or find costumes that are authentic to my topic, and will I be able to create an effective set and find appropriate props that will make my performance come alive? (Remember, costumes do not need to be elaborate, and sets and props do not need to be large or complicated. Simplicity in performances can often be quite effective.)
- Is creating a performance the best way to show off my topic? Why or why not?

Groups, Movements. After brainstorming for topics with my teacher and family, I decided to focus my final project on the U.S. Congressional Committee called the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC). HUAC was originally formed during the 1920s to combat perceived Communist infiltration in the United States. At first, HUAC did not receive much publicity, but that changed dramatically in the mid-1940s when the committee focused its attention on possible Communist infiltration of Hollywood and the movie industry. HUAC convinced many Americans that screenwriters, producers, and actors in Hollywood were promoting Communist ideas in their movies. Newspapers gave a great deal of coverage to the story, and Congress soon made HUAC a permanent Committee with guaranteed funding.

As I started to read about HUAC, I discovered Dalton Trumbo (who became the main focus for my NHD project) and the other members of what came to be known as "the Hollywood Ten," a group of ten men from Hollywood who were called to testify before the committee. HUAC became infamous for asking witnesses, "Are you now or have you ever been a member of the Communist Party?" Each member of the Hollywood Ten took a stand by refusing to answer the committee's question; as a result, each was *blacklisted* so that he could no longer find work in Hollywood, and each man was sentenced to jail.

As I continued researching, I realized that this topic could easily fit into any of the four NHD categories. A paper could have quoted from the 1940s *Congressional Record* or from writings by or interviews with the members of the Hollywood Ten. An exhibit might have used various newspaper clippings and photographs, both of which were plentiful. In a performance, I might have portrayed one or more of the individuals in the group, or I could have taken on the role of a member of HUAC. But because I could locate ample video clips and photographs and still enjoyed working alone and with video, I decided for the fifth time to enter the Individual Media category.

Each category offers wonderful opportunities to demonstrate what you have learned, the extensive research you have conducted, and your own individual talents. The key here is to select the category which will let you and your work shine most brightly! I learned this lesson, and in my senior year, thorough research combined with my careful efforts to match my topic to the category paid off handsomely: my documentary placed fifth in the nation in the Senior Individual Media category that year.

Bill Lickiss' National History Day involvement started fourteen years ago. He participated as a student in NHD for five years, from 8th through 12th grades. After earning a degree in education, he taught middle school social studies in California for several years and introduced his students to NHD. Bill currently works as the Contest and Program Manager for NHD.

A Teacher's First Experience with National History Day

Cellene Smith, Teacher, Arizona

*Arizona teacher Cellene Smith shares stories about her first experience bringing National History Day to her students. She describes successes as well as things that did not work out quite as she had hoped, and talks about future plans for expanding NHD's role in her classes.—*EDITOR

Introducing Students to Research

During the 2003-2004 school year, I had my first opportunity to introduce students to historical research methods, the use of primary sources, and National History Day. After several years of pressuring my school to offer advanced history instruction, my efforts bore fruit and the principal assigned me a 10th grade Honors World History Class. I planned to use the AP World History Curriculum as a model, which meant that writing and critical thinking skills would need to be major components of the course. I also wanted to involve students in actually doing their own research.

I knew that the context in which I teach might make it difficult to accomplish my goals for this course in the first year. I teach at Chino Valley High School, a small, 800-student rural high school located in central Arizona. Most of the students are from lower- to middle-income families. Student access to the Internet, libraries, and research facilities is quite limited, as is many students' exposure to basic research skills.

Geography limits my students' access to resources. The town of Chino Valley has one small public library, located about two miles from the school. Otherwise, one has to drive twenty miles to Prescott, Arizona, the nearest city of significant size, to reach any other library or research facility. In Prescott, students can visit two libraries—a larger public library than the one in Chino Valley, and the one that serves Yavapai Community College. Prescott also has a research archive associated with a local museum called Sharlot Hall. All other research facilities, archives, libraries, colleges, and museums are nearly a three-hour drive (one way) from Chino Valley. Most of my students are still too young to drive, so parents must drive them to any of the available libraries other than the small one in the school or the public library in town.


SPANISH "FLU" CLAIMS MANY NEW VICTIMS

By Associated Press.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 30. — More than 30,000 new cases of Spanish influenza were reported from the army camps during the 48 hours ending at noon today. Pneumonia cases reported number 733, and the deaths 277. The total of all pneumonia cases is 5,705 with deaths 1,577.

This newspaper headline and the others with this article appeared in the daily Prescott Journal-Miner in September–November 1918.

Because of the difficulty in accessing research facilities, therefore, my students and I have to rely heavily on the Internet for most of our research needs. The kind of extended access and concentrated time to use computers and Internet for research at school is fairly limited. While the school does have computers in the library and one computer lab, there are none in any of the classrooms.

SERUM TO CURE INFLUENZA IS DISCOVERED

NEW YORK, Oct. 1.—The discovery of a serum which, he said, preliminary experiments indicate will act as a preventive for Spanish influenza

FLU SPREADS AND FT. WHIPPLE IS QUARANTINED

DISCOVERY OF 12 NEW CASES AT POST CAUSES AUTHORITIES TO CLOSE RESERVATION TO CIVILIAN VISITORS.

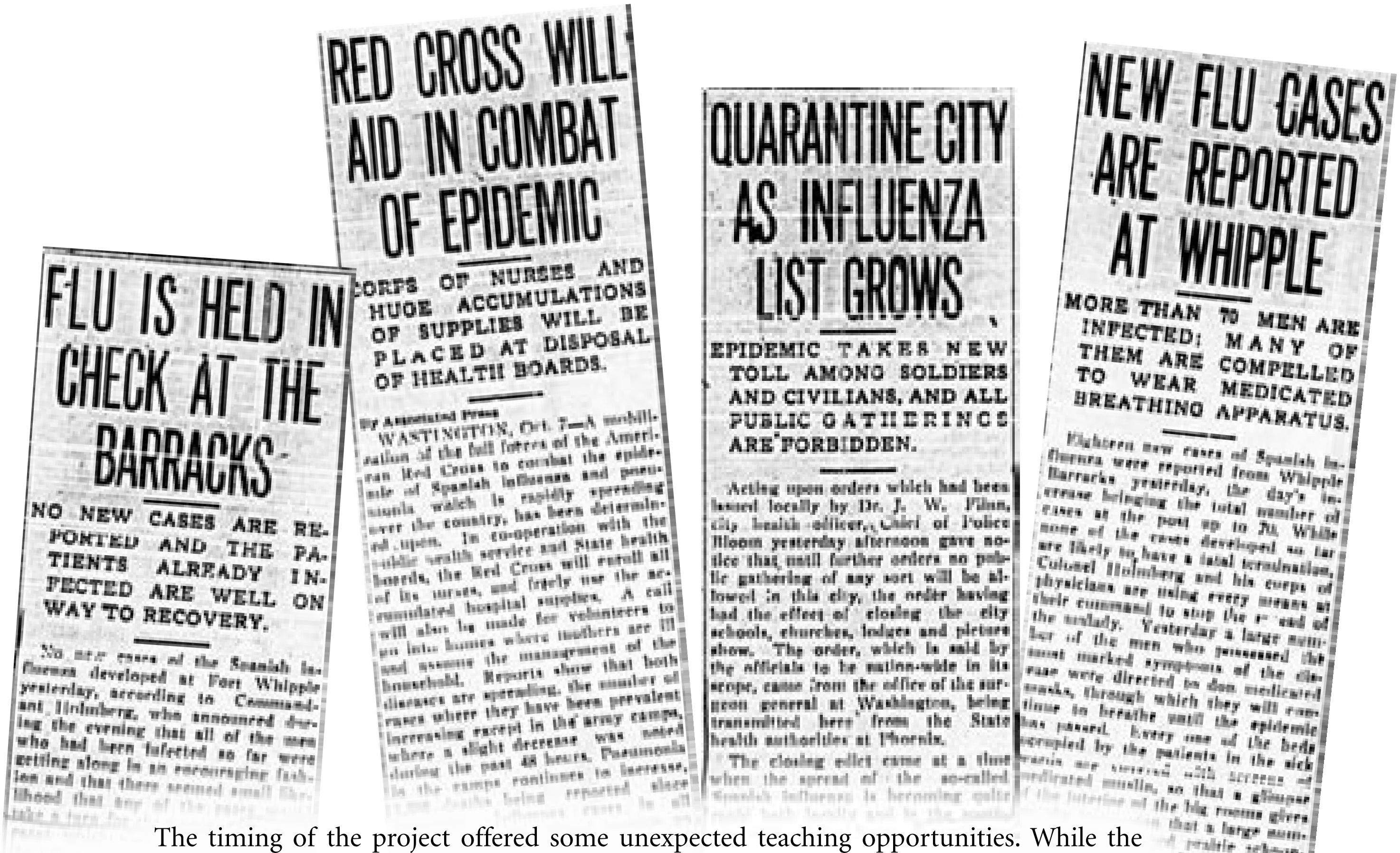
An even bigger barrier that I had to overcome, though, was the students' lack of experience in doing previous serious historical research or applying analytical thinking skills. The extent of their prior experience consisted of writing short papers or working on small school projects. For past class assignments, many of them simply used encyclopedias and whatever they could find on the Internet to fulfill their source requirements. They had written "reports," summarizing and repeating back information from those sources, but they had not been taught or expected to analyze information or critique their sources.

I decided that I had to start by teaching my students the higher level skills they lacked. Even though this was a world history class, it seemed like I could best accomplish my goals by having them study the local impact of a world-wide disaster: the 1918 influenza epidemic. At the beginning of the school year, I assigned a semester-long class project. The class would produce an article for our local newspaper, the *Prescott Courier*, about how our local area was affected by the epidemic, based on investigation of primary sources. Each student had to write his or her own article, and then the class would work together to combine and condense their individual articles into a single piece which would be submitted to the newspaper.

Class Project: 1918 Flu Epidemic

To prepare my students to work with primary sources, I first had the class watch one of the episodes in the PBS documentary series *American Experience* that dealt with the epidemic. Since *American Experience: Influenza 1918* focuses on events and impacts within the United States, I next had my students read secondary source material about the epidemic as part of world history. We discussed the flu epidemic in the context of World War I and other aspects of world history of that time. Then, students started looking for additional information and sources on the Internet. They explored, and brought back to the class websites they had found. I taught them to examine and analyze the sources, and to figure out which were appropriate for research and which probably were not. The following were among the most useful sites they found:

- Project Fort Greene—Yesterday and Today for Tomorrow: "The Influenza Pandemic of 1918," by Andrew Spellen (**http://pd.ilt.columbia.edu/banneker/fgproj/influ.htm**);
- "The Influenza Pandemic of 1918" (**www.stanford.edu/group/virus/uda**); and
- Influenza Epidemic of 1918-1919: A Selected Bibliography (**http://ublib.buffalo.edu/hsl/resources/guides/flu.html**).



FLU IS HELD IN CHECK AT THE BARRACKS

NO NEW CASES ARE REPORTED AND THE PATIENTS ALREADY INFECTED ARE WELL ON WAY TO RECOVERY.

RED CROSS WILL AID IN COMBAT OF EPIDEMIC

CORPS OF NURSES AND HUGE ACCUMULATIONS OF SUPPLIES WILL BE PLACED AT DISPOSAL OF HEALTH BOARDS.

QUARANTINE CITY AS INFLUENZA LIST GROWS

EPIDEMIC TAKES NEW TOLL AMONG SOLDIERS AND CIVILIANS, AND ALL PUBLIC GATHERINGS ARE FORBIDDEN.

NEW FLU CASES ARE REPORTED AT WHIPPLE

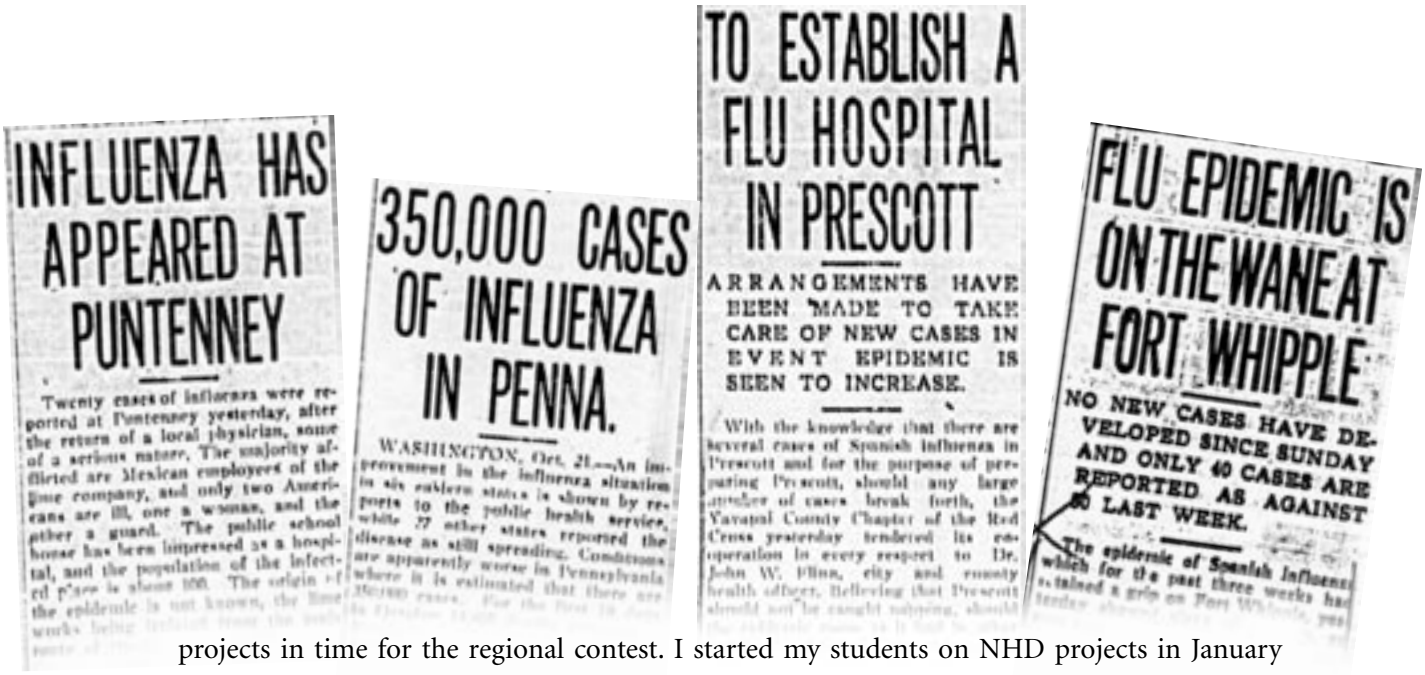
MORE THAN 70 MEN ARE INFECTED: MANY OF THEM ARE COMPELLED TO WEAR MEDICATED BREATHING APPARATUS.

The timing of the project offered some unexpected teaching opportunities. While the class was working on this project, news media reported that a new and deadly flu-like illness had shown up in Asia and was quickly spreading to other parts of the world. Headlines talked about "Bird Flu" and the SARS epidemic. In addition, the flu virus that hit the United States that winter was said to be particularly virulent, and the students had quite a bit of first-hand experience with being sick. Students read current newspaper articles, and we compared events and media coverage in 1918 to what was happening in 2003. This was an excellent way to show how historical research can apply to current events, which often helps engage students with material that otherwise would seem boring or irrelevant to their lives.

To kick off the next part of the project, I scheduled a full day's field trip to Sharlot Hall. Never having been in an archive before, students thought it would be "just another library" and could not figure out why I was taking them there. The Sharlot Hall archivist met with my students and gave an introductory talk about what an archive is and what its purposes are. The students soon became intrigued. As the archivist brought out original sources, I watched my students' eyes widen and light up. The research bug had bitten! The Sharlot Hall staff worked with my class throughout the semester, and the January 25, 2004 Sharlot Hall Museum "Days Past" column in the *Prescott Courier* featured my class's article, "1918 Influenza Struck an Unsuspecting Northern Arizona."

Involvement with National History Day

With my first goal achieved, I wanted to foster my students' newly developed interest in history and historical research. I recalled seeing a flyer several months earlier that talked about something called National History Day. I did a little research of my own and learned that while I had missed Arizona's fall teacher workshops, if I acted quickly, my students could still complete


INFLUENZA HAS APPEARED AT PUNTENNEY

Twenty cases of influenza were reported at Puntenney yesterday, after the return of a local physician, some of a serious nature. The majority afflicted are Mexican employees of the lime company, and only two Americans are ill, one a woman, and the other a guard. The public school house has been impressed as a hospital, and the population of the infected place is above 100. The origin of the epidemic is not known, the first

350,000 CASES OF INFLUENZA IN PENNA.

WASHINGTON, Oct. 21.—An improvement in the influenza situation in six eastern states is shown by reports to the public health service, while 27 other states reported the disease as still spreading. Conditions are apparently worse in Pennsylvania where it is estimated that there are

TO ESTABLISH A FLU HOSPITAL IN PRESCOTT

ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE TO TAKE CARE OF NEW CASES IN EVENT EPIDEMIC IS SEEN TO INCREASE.

With the knowledge that there are several cases of Spanish influenza in Prescott and for the purpose of preparing Prescott, should any large number of cases break forth, the Yavapai County Chapter of the Red Cross yesterday tendered its cooperation in every respect to Dr. John W. Winn, city and county health officer. Believing that Prescott should not be caught napping, should

FLU EPIDEMIC IS ON THE WANE AT FORT WHIPPLE

NO NEW CASES HAVE DEVELOPED SINCE SUNDAY AND ONLY 40 CASES ARE REPORTED AS AGAINST 80 LAST WEEK.

The epidemic of Spanish Influenza which for the past three weeks has obtained a grip on Fort Whipple

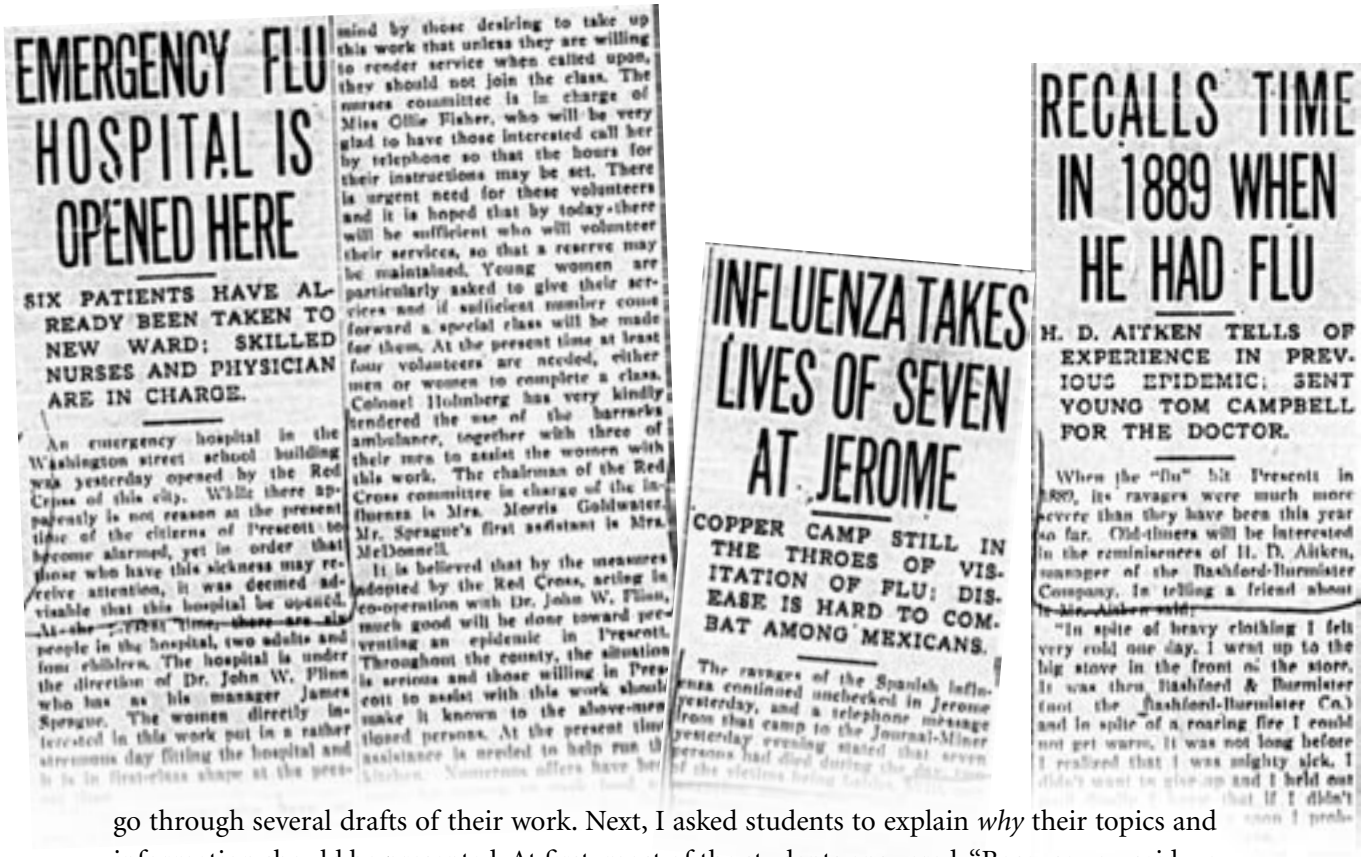
projects in time for the regional contest. I started my students on NHD projects in January 2004. Because of the late start, I needed to help my students make use of whatever resources were readily available. I encouraged them to make telephone calls, write letters, and use materials from the local public library and community college library in Preston to supplement research via the Internet.

Rules for the contest and its different categories were at times puzzling to both me and the students. I tried to reduce some of the complexity of the program by limiting my students' options a bit in that first year of my NHD involvement. Since I have written papers and put together exhibits but have not written scripts, given performances, or put together documentaries, I suggested that students stick with exhibits or papers unless they really wanted to try one of the other two types of projects.

In spite of my preference for exhibits or papers, one student convinced me to let her do a performance. Until I went to the regional contest, I did not realize that doing a performance meant the student had to go to the contest and perform it live, so my student put together a video of her performance and submitted that to the regional contest. Daunted by the need to revise her project for a live performance, she dropped out before the Arizona State Contest.

While the NHD State Coordinator assisted me when I contacted her for clarification, other aspects of rules, formats, and requirements for NHD were also somewhat confusing. "Process papers" and the NHD format for bibliographies were new to me as well as to my students. I misunderstood the interview part of the process and did not realize until we got to the regional contest that all students, regardless of project category, needed to go to the contest so that judges could interview them about their entries. These experiences, while frustrating at the time, made me more aware of what NHD requires and will help me better guide my students in future years.

I quickly realized that I would have to help my students develop their research and analytical skills even further if they were to create successful NHD projects. Students found it particularly difficult to grasp the concept of connecting a topic to the year's theme. I gave short assignments to help them understand. They had to explain *how* their topic tied to the theme. We discussed their statements, and then I made them go back and elaborate, refining and augmenting their initial explanations. We went through several rounds of this process, just as historians



EMERGENCY FLU HOSPITAL IS OPENED HERE

SIX PATIENTS HAVE ALREADY BEEN TAKEN TO NEW WARD; SKILLED NURSES AND PHYSICIAN ARE IN CHARGE.

An emergency hospital in the Washington street school building was yesterday opened by the Red Cross of this city. While there apparently is not reason at the present time of the citizens of Prescott to become alarmed, yet in order that those who have this sickness may receive attention, it was deemed advisable that this hospital be opened. At the present time, there are six people in the hospital, two adults and four children. The hospital is under the direction of Dr. John W. Flinn who has as his manager James Sprague. The women directly interested in this work put in a rather strenuous day fitting the hospital and

mind by those desiring to take up this work that unless they are willing to render service when called upon, they should not join the class. The nurses committee is in charge of Miss Ollie Fisher, who will be very glad to have those interested call her by telephone so that the hours for their instructions may be set. There is urgent need for these volunteers and it is hoped that by today there will be sufficient who will volunteer their services, so that a reserve may be maintained. Young women are particularly asked to give their services and if sufficient number come forward a special class will be made for them. At the present time at least four volunteers are needed, either men or women to complete a class. Colonel Holmberg has very kindly tendered the use of the barracks ambulance, together with three of their men to assist the women with this work. The chairman of the Red Cross committee in charge of the influenza is Mrs. Morris Goldwater. Mr. Sprague's first assistant is Mrs. McDonnell.

It is believed that by the measures adopted by the Red Cross, acting in co-operation with Dr. John W. Flinn, much good will be done toward preventing an epidemic in Prescott. Throughout the county, the situation is serious and those willing in Prescott to assist with this work should make it known to the above-mentioned persons. At the present time assistance is needed to help run the

INFLUENZA TAKES LIVES OF SEVEN AT JEROME

COPPER CAMP STILL IN THE THROES OF VISITATION OF FLU; DISEASE IS HARD TO COMBAT AMONG MEXICANS.

The ravages of the Spanish influenza continued unchecked in Jerome yesterday, and a telephone message from that camp to the Journal-Miner yesterday evening stated that seven persons had died during the

RECALLS TIME IN 1889 WHEN HE HAD FLU

H. D. AITKEN TELLS OF EXPERIENCE IN PREVIOUS EPIDEMIC; SENT YOUNG TOM CAMPBELL FOR THE DOCTOR.

When the "flu" hit Prescott in 1889, its ravages were much more severe than they have been this year so far. Old-timers will be interested in the reminiscences of H. D. Aitken, manager of the Rashford-Burmister Company. In telling a friend about

"In spite of heavy clothing I felt very cold one day. I went up to the big stove in the front of the store. It was then Rashford & Burmister (not the Rashford-Burmister Co.) and in spite of a roaring fire I could not get warm. It was not long before I realized that I was mighty sick. I didn't want to give up and I held out

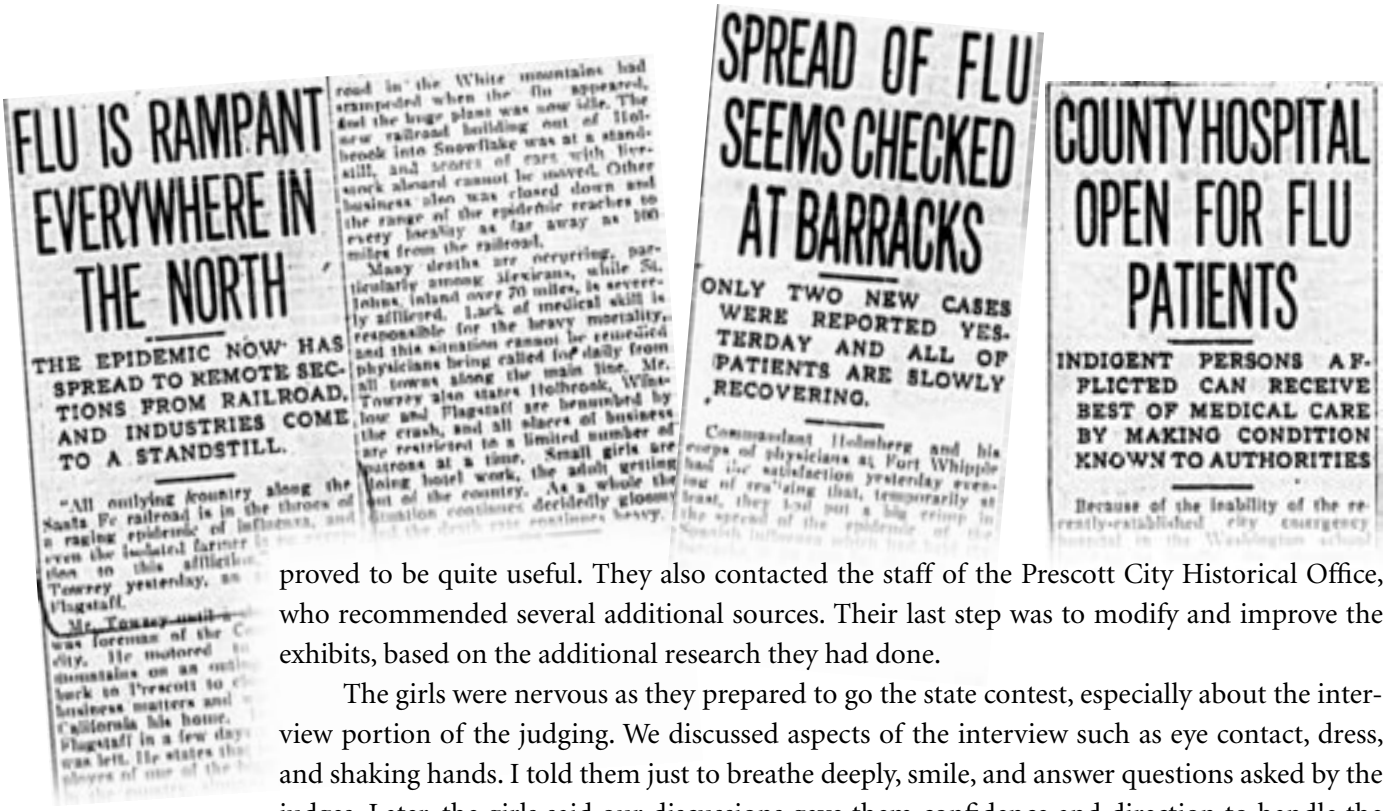
go through several drafts of their work. Next, I asked students to explain *why* their topics and information should be presented. At first, most of the students answered, "Because you said we had to." Eventually, most students seemed to accept the challenge and gave more thoughtful answers about their topic's significance. I enjoyed watching them begin to ask probing questions and explore how they could clarify and improve their presentations.

It was not only the students who had to learn and change. As a teacher new to National History Day, I had to alter my behavior, too. Rather than imparting information or giving answers, I taught skills and methods and tried to guide students so that they could discover sources and answers for themselves. I faced another challenge: with each student working on a different topic, I had to learn enough about each subject that I could stay a step ahead, assess their progress, and offer appropriate suggestions for further research and investigation.

In the end, only two of my students went on to the Arizona State Contest – and how those two young ladies bloomed as they developed and refined their entries! Both participated in the individual exhibit category, and both did local history topics, which made it easier to find information and primary sources. After the regional contest, I sat down with the two of them. Together, we reviewed and discussed the regional contest judging sheets for their entries, going over each element one by one. Then we sketched out, in writing, exactly what tasks each student needed to undertake to improve her exhibit.

After our discussion and planning, the next step was to do more research. The two students returned to Sharlot Hall to look in the archive for additional primary sources and photographs. On a trip to the Prescott Public Library, the girls discovered the Vertical Files,[1] which

[1] Libraries and archives often keep "vertical files" for their patrons' use. Organized by subject headings or names of people or places, they contain various newspaper or magazine articles, and miscellaneous materials related to the topic. In their study of the Flu epidemic of 1918, Ms. Smith's students might have looked at vertical files related to "influenza," epidemics," "diseases," "World War I," "medicine," and "1910-1920."



FLU IS RAMPANT EVERYWHERE IN THE NORTH

THE EPIDEMIC NOW HAS SPREAD TO REMOTE SECTIONS FROM RAILROAD, AND INDUSTRIES COME TO A STANDSTILL.

SPREAD OF FLU SEEMS CHECKED AT BARRACKS

ONLY TWO NEW CASES WERE REPORTED YESTERDAY AND ALL OF PATIENTS ARE SLOWLY RECOVERING.

COUNTY HOSPITAL OPEN FOR FLU PATIENTS

INDIGENT PERSONS AFFLICTED CAN RECEIVE BEST OF MEDICAL CARE BY MAKING CONDITION KNOWN TO AUTHORITIES

proved to be quite useful. They also contacted the staff of the Prescott City Historical Office, who recommended several additional sources. Their last step was to modify and improve the exhibits, based on the additional research they had done.

The girls were nervous as they prepared to go the state contest, especially about the interview portion of the judging. We discussed aspects of the interview such as eye contact, dress, and shaking hands. I told them just to breathe deeply, smile, and answer questions asked by the judges. Later, the girls said our discussions gave them confidence and direction to handle the interviews. This preparation apparently helped, since judges for both entries commented on judging sheets that the students did very well in the interviews. Both had a wonderful time at the State Contest, and I was so proud of both of their exhibits. One of the girls even won a special award for "Best Use of Museums and Archives" at the state contest, for her exhibit on Prescott architecture.

Plans for Next Year

While I identified some gaps in my own preparation for my class's NHD participation, I realized that my research experience and knowledge provide a strong foundation for using the NHD program in my classroom. Although I have taught for many years, this experience reminded me that students will rise to the occasion when I give them challenging tasks and help them to reach those goals.

This year, I will require each student in my Honors class to participate in NHD. We will start earlier in the school year, and I will do a better job of guiding my students in their individual research and project development. I plan to reserve the entire computer lab for two periods a week so that my honors history students can do some of the required level of in-depth research at school.

I hope at least half of my students will go to the state contest, and perhaps one or two will set a precedent and go on to the National contest. Most importantly, though, I hope to spark in all of my students an appetite for research, an appreciation of critical thinking, and a love of history.

Cellene Smith teaches World Geography and World History at Chino Valley High School in rural Arizona. She first learned about and introduced her students to National History Day during the 2003-2004 school year.